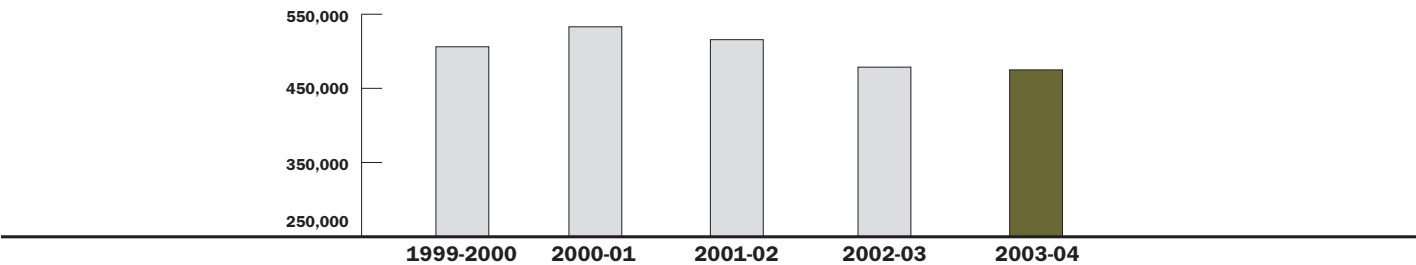


Transit Ridership Falls to Seven-Year Low in 2003-04, But Largest Operators Buck Downward Trend

- Transit ridership declined for the third year in a row in 2003-04, decreasing by 1 percent to 475 million — the lowest level of ridership since 1997-98. But following declines of 7 percent in 2002-03 and 3 percent in 2001-02, the rate of decline appears to have slowed for the first time since ridership peaked in 2000-01, the height of the region’s economic expansion. (Also, partial-year results reported by some transit operators in 2005 indicate a reversal of the ridership slide.)
- In contrast with prior years, ridership on the three largest operators (Muni, BART and AC Transit) held steady or increased slightly from the prior year.
- Midsized operators such as VTA and SamTrans experienced ridership losses in the double digits. Such

Ridership on Bay Area Transit Systems by Operator, Fiscal Years 1999-2000 – 2003-04

Operator	Thousands of Annual Boardings					Percent Change	
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2002-03– 2003-04	1999-2000– 2003-04
Muni	226,182	236,205	234,303	216,947	217,049	0%	–4%
BART	97,024	103,919	97,351	93,799	98,026	+5%	+1%
AC Transit	68,088	71,529	69,531	62,755	64,906	+3%	–5%
Valley Transportation Authority	55,701	58,160	53,710	46,864	39,776	–15%	–29%
SamTrans	17,925	18,136	17,387	16,859	15,064	–11%	–16%
Golden Gate Transit	11,465	11,618	10,676	10,261	9,789	–5%	–15%
Caltrain	8,735	9,925	8,138	7,870	8,015	+2%	–8%
Other Operators	20,986	23,546	24,460	23,232	22,391	–4%	+7%
Total – All Operators	506,106	533,038	515,556	478,587	475,016	–1%	–6%



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Commission and transit operators
Data for FY 2003-04 is provisional.

decreases in ridership likely resulted from service cuts (11 percent cut in revenue-miles of service by VTA and 7 percent by SamTrans) in 2003-04 due to budget con-

straints. Along with Golden Gate Transit, these operators experienced the largest cumulative decrease in ridership over the five-year period from 1999-2000 to 2003-04.

**A Closer Look at
Top 10 Ridership Bus
Routes, by Boardings**

- There is a large degree of year-to-year consistency in the list of the most heavily used Bay Area bus routes.
- Significantly, the number one and two routes carry more than twice as many passengers on an average weekday as the number nine and 10 routes.
- In 2003-04, eight of the top 10 bus routes were operated by San Francisco Muni, which also boasts the largest ridership among all Bay Area transit operators.

Top 10 Bay Area Bus Routes, by Boardings

Rank	Route	Average Weekday Boardings 2003-04	2002-03 Rank
1.	SF Muni: 38 Geary	49,300	1
2.	SF Muni: 14 Mission	47,200	2
3.	SF Muni: 9 San Bruno	32,100	4
4.	SF Muni: 30 Stockton	30,800	6
5.	SF Muni: 49 Van Ness/Mission	28,900	3
6.	SF Muni: 1 California	27,800	5
7.	SF Muni: 15 Third St.	25,300	6
8.	Valley Transportation Authority: 22 Eastridge – Palo Alto/Meno Park	20,500	8
9.	AC Transit: 82 International/East 14th	20,100	NA
10.	SF Muni: 22 Fillmore	19,600	9

Sources: Muni, VTA, AC Transit